

## EXTENSION OF RITTENHOUSE STREET IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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DECEMBER 16, 1924.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed

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Mr. REED of West Virginia, from the Committee on the District of Columbia, submitted the following

### REPORT

[To accompany S. 2593]

The Committee on the District of Columbia, to whom was referred the bill (S. 2593) to provide for the extension of Rittenhouse Street in the District of Columbia, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with the recommendation that the bill do pass with the following amendments:

Strike out the figures "115/51" in line 8, page 1, and insert in lieu thereof the figures "115/69."

Strike out the lines 5, 6, and 7, page 2, and insert in lieu thereof the following:

Such proceedings shall be instituted and prosecuted under and in accordance with the provisions of the act of Congress entitled, "An act to provide for the condemnation of streets or parts of streets under the plan for the permanent system of highways for the District of Columbia," approved March 30, 1910.

Strike out the last paragraph (lines 19, 20, and 21), page 2, and add after line 18 the following:

*Provided*, That said commissioners may, if they deem it advisable so to do, suspend the actual use of said street until a conduit or viaduct has been constructed to provide a roadway through said street under the tracks of said railroad: *Provided further*, That nothing shall prevent the use of said street for the installation of sewers, water, gas, and electric light mains for the use of the property along said street as extended.

This bill provides for the condemnation of a small parcel of land lying between Blair Road and the tracks of the Metropolitan branch of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Co., 371 feet long, for the purpose of extending Rittenhouse Street and makes the dedication of the land necessary for this extension from the railroad tracks east to Sligo Mill Road, a distance of about 1,550 feet, a condition precedent to the condemnation of this small parcel. The property owners interested have offered to make this dedication.

The Senate Committee on the District of Columbia held an extensive hearing on a similar measure presented in the Sixty-seventh Congress, reported it favorably, but it was not reached for action. On April 10, 1924, Senator Ball filed report No. 412 on S. 2593, the bill now before the House, from which the following is quoted:

The extension of Rittenhouse Street, as provided for in this bill, is strongly urged by the Masonic and Eastern Star Home, which has for its purpose the care of the aged and infirm dependent Masons and the widows of such. This home is located on Sligo Mill Road, just south of where Rittenhouse Street, when extended, will intersect with Sligo Mill Road. In order to reach the home it is now necessary for the relatives and friends of the inmates to go from the car line at Third and Rittenhouse Streets to Blair Road; then south nearly half a mile along Blair Road; then eastwardly across a dilapidated bridge, along Sligo Mill Road, which is unimproved and in a very bad condition for traveling, especially in winter weather.

The Masonic and Eastern Star Home now obtains its supply of water by means of a 2-inch water main which runs from Blair Road through the proposed line of Rittenhouse Street. This water main is wholly in private property and is maintained simply and entirely at the sufferance of the owners of the property. The extension of Rittenhouse Street as proposed would enable this home and the other owners of property in that vicinity to secure the benefit of adequate water and sewer facilities, gas, and electric lights, of which they are now deprived.

Without such facilities the owners of the land lying east of the railroad tracks can not develop and improve their property, yet they are required to pay taxes thereon. The committee feels that these owners should be permitted to develop and improve their land in accordance with their best judgment.

It would seem that the offer of the owners of the land east of the railroad to dedicate sufficient land for the extension of Rittenhouse Street should be accepted without further delay in the public interest, as the postponement of the extension might entail large expense upon the Government or result in the placing of financial burdens upon the owners of property in that vicinity.

Rittenhouse Street is the only street fully paved and improved from Georgia Avenue to Blair Road in that section. To put any other street between Georgia Avenue and Blair Road in the same state of improvement would require the expenditure of thousands of dollars.

In addition to the report quoted above, the following letter also indicates the necessity for the extension of Rittenhouse Street, as provided in the proposed legislation:

MAY 22, 1924.

HON. FREDERICK N. ZIHLMAN,  
*Acting Chairman of the House District Committee,  
House of Representatives.*

MY DEAR MR. ZIHLMAN: \* \* \* The home, in which there are now between 60 and 70 people—old people and children—is sadly in need of water and sewerage facilities, especially the latter, which can not be had until some street is opened up nearer than what is now the case. I understand that Sligo Mill Road, on which the home property is located, is not a part of the proposed street-extension plan of the District of Columbia.

The only other hope we have for water and sewerage facilities is from the extension of New Hampshire Avenue through to the District line, but apparently that is several years off because of the great expense involved.

I hope sincerely that the House District Committee may look with favor on the Senate bill and conclude to report it for passage at the present session. It means, in my opinion, an almost immediate development of the property to the east of Blair Road, with large resulting benefits to the District.

Very sincerely yours,

LURTIN R. GINN,  
*President Masonic and Eastern Star Home.*